

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for the Coordination of Education and Training – COVID-19

Minister for Education



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BUILDING BETTER, SAFER SCHOOLS ACROSS VICTORIA

The Victorian Government will deliver vital maintenance and safety works at more than 400 schools to support jobs and local businesses through the coronavirus pandemic and improve facilities for students and staff across Victoria.

Minister for Education James Merlino today announced hundreds of schools will share in more than \$15.3 million through the *2020-21 Bushfire Preparedness (Vegetation) Program* and *Planned Maintenance Program*.

The Bushfire Preparedness funding will see 346 schools share in more than \$9 million to clear vegetation and undertake other essential maintenance ahead of the upcoming bushfire season.

109 schools will share in \$6.3 million of *Planned Maintenance Program* funding for essential work to grounds and classrooms such as fixing roofs and windows, painting, resurfacing floors and replacing windows, as well as repairing landscaping like pathways and steps.

Over \$2 million of this will go towards maintenance to Shelter-in-Place buildings at 12 schools, which provide temporary accommodation to staff and students in the case of a bushfire.

Works with contractors will be carried out under COVID-19 advice guidelines to ensure the health and safety of staff and students.

If works can't start immediately due to Stage 4 restrictions, offsite planning of these works and any that are essential for school safety will continue.

The Government is investing an unprecedented \$7.2 billion in Victorian school infrastructure, which is delivering more than 1,460 school upgrades and 100 new schools by 2026 – ensuring every child can access a great local school where they can achieve their best.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

"These projects will create jobs, boost local businesses and create safer schools for kids across the state."

"Our record investment in school infrastructure is delivering high quality classrooms for our hard-working principals, teachers and students."

"We are ensuring that every Victorian school is well maintained and safe so that every student can learn in the best possible environment."